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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [GG](#)

SUBJECT: GEORGIA: PROTEST UPDATE - GACHECHILADZE TALKING

REF: TBILISI 1033

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOHN F. TEFFT. REASONS: 1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. (C) Summary/Comment: Protests again were meager on June 4 and appear to be losing more momentum. The Ambassador met with Irakli Alasania (Alliance) at his request. Alasania confirmed that Levan Gachechiladze is speaking with the GoG. Alasania said that according to Gachechiladze, Saakashvili had agreed to meet and discuss Gachechiladze as a potential Prime Minister. Alasania said that he and other moderates supported the talks. Alasania also indicated that he feels that he has been temporarily sidelined as the GoG has shifted its focus to Gachechiladze. Gachechiladze's willingness to discuss realistic compromise scenarios with the support of some non-parliamentary leaders is a small but possibly significant development. At a minimum, the GoG and non-parliamentary opposition have two open channels for discussions. Nonetheless, the GoG appears willing to move on with or without negotiations, highlighted by both Speaker Bakradze and President Saakashvili making terse statements about the non-parliamentary opposition's demands. Non-parliamentary opposition leaders Alasania, Burjanadze, Zourabichvili and Kukava have scheduled a late afternoon meeting June 5 with the diplomatic corps. End Summary/Comment.

Alasania Says Levan Possibly Ready to Deal

12. (C) Alasania told the Ambassador that the GoG had been speaking with Gachechiladze who told Alasania that they had offered him the position of Prime Minister. Alasania said that he and a number of other more moderate leaders supported Gachechiladze pursuing dialogue while more radical members opposed dialogue. A potential meeting with Saakashvili was tentatively arranged, but Gachechiladze got cold feet. Nevertheless, Alasania expects Gachechiladze to meet with Saakashvili in the near future. Alasania said his channel with Speaker Bakradze had come to a temporary standstill. Alasania said that he thought the GoG was shifting their focus to Gachechiladze, but did not speculate as to the reasons the shift had occurred.

Saakashvili - Bakradze Lay Down the Line

13. (C) After his meeting with Avtandil Demetrashvili, the incoming chairman of the newly formed Constitutional Commission, President Saakashvili ruled out the possibility of early elections saying he would not yield "to pressure from the street". Saakashvili continued that "(e)verybody has seen that the government will not take decisions upon pressure from the streets. But on the other hand dialogue and taking into consideration society's interests is very important in order to achieve civil peace and unity." Bakradze followed the same line in a sharp response to question about Alasania's early comments that the GoG was unwilling to engage in dialogue. Bakradze chastised the non-parliamentary opposition saying that "(i)f the opposition wants and is interested in constitutional reform and a strong parliament, we call on them and we expect them to participate in the work of the commission on constitutional reform."

Bakradze repeated that the non-parliamentary opposition should participate in the electoral code working group and anti-crisis council if they are truly serious about democratic reform. Bakradze closed his statement noting that the GoG's position was "that we need to move from words to deeds and we offer practical steps to the opposition for launching a dialogue."
TEFFT